

6 rows, could hardly be assessed accurately from two pressed specimens. Many writers subsequent to Bentham placed undue emphasis on his statement concerning the leaf "broader for its length than any other species of *Caladenia*" and disregarded his qualification "but not yet fully developed."

—J. R. TONKINSON, Mosman Park.

Unusual Boobook Owl Call.—Storr (*W.A. Nat.*, 4 : 143.) recorded an unusual call of a Boobook Owl (*Ninox novaezeelandiae*) which he likened to a pumping plant, heard on March 12, 1954 at Dunsborough.

A similar call was heard at Carbarup, just north of Mt. Barker, during 1958. Carbarup siding is near a patch of low-lying Wandoo-Yate association providing a suitable habitat for hollow roosting birds. At 2300 hrs. on August 8 there was no moon and the night was still and clear. Three Boobooks were heard calling the normal "boo-book" call, regular calls being given every three to four seconds.

One bird then commenced calling much more rapidly with increasing tempo until at last the first syllable of the call was completely suppressed and only the final "book" was being given. For the first five minutes of the call I counted the "hooks"—450. The call then continued for about another five minutes, so altogether something like a thousand "books" must have been given during the time it lasted. Calling then ceased and all birds were silent.

It is worthy of note also that although the night was extremely dark Western Magpies (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*) were heard calling full carols at the time when the Owls started. At this time of the year moonlight songs might be expected (Robinson, *Emu*, 56 : 282) but calling in complete darkness seems unusual. Possibly the birds were disturbed when my Land Rover drove up.

—ERIC LINDGREN, Shenton Park.

Possible Record of a Yellow-billed Spoonbill near Narrikup.—In addition to the recent records of the Yellow-billed Spoonbill (*Platalea flavipes*) in the South-West (*W.A. Nat.*, 6 : 151, 196) is an observation on November 2, 1958 of what appears to be this species at a lake about 4 miles west of Narrikup, locally known as Lake Erie.

The lake is some 40-50 acres in area and is surrounded almost completely by a border of twig rush (*Cladium* sp.). At the time the birds were recorded there was shallow water outside the rushes, covering a firm surface of fodder and small water plants. This is mentioned because in the field I misidentified the birds as Royal Spoonbills (*P. leucorodia*) recording in my notebook that they had a yellow bill and black legs. Checking through Serventy and Whittell, *The Handbook of the Birds of W.A.*, I found that the Royal Spoonbill had black bill and legs and the Yellow-billed species yellow legs and bill. It seemed possible that the bird's legs might have become discoloured by mud, although improbable that they

would be completely covered. However the nature of the habitat in which they were feeding precludes this idea.

To check, a week later I asked John Treasure, a young ornithologist who directed my attention to the lake, to send me a note giving the colour of the bird's legs and bill. These agreed with those I had recorded. He also stated that the birds had been present for some months, always being seen around the lake margin.

—ERIC LINDGREN, Shenton Park.

Additional Records of the Gull-billed Tern in Western Australia.

—The status of the Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) in Western Australia has been recently reviewed (J. R. Ford, *W.A. Nat.*, 6, 197). Further records are now available, indicating that the species is apparently increasing in abundance throughout the State.

On May 17, 1959, I saw 6 Gull-billed Terns at Jandakot Lake, about 15 miles south of Perth. Most of the birds were in full eclipse-plumage, the black on the head being confined to the lores and a small area around the eyes. The remainder had, in addition, a few blackish feathers on the crown. Excepting the ends of the primaries, which were a dark grey, and the small amount of black on the head, the plumage was apparently white, and the legs and heavy gull-like bill were black.

With the view of obtaining additional records of the species, Jandakot Lake was revisited on May 23, 1959, May 24, June 21, June 28 and February 7, 1960, when 4, 1, 30, 8 and 2 eclipse-plumaged birds, respectively, were noted. During these visits Marsh Terns (*Chlidonias hybrida*) were observed in flocks up to about 150.

The Gull-billed Tern's method of feeding is interesting and readily assists with its identification when the birds are some distance away when it is difficult to note accurately details of the plumage. From a height of 20 to 30 feet, with tail fanned, wings outstretched and occasional flapping, they glide swiftly down to the surface of the water. The head is then quickly tilted downwards so that the bill is nearly vertical and only the tip touches the water. Then, having seized the prey, the terns gain height rapidly and recommence their slow hawk-like flight around the lake. On no occasion have I observed a tern diving into or settling on the water.

Whilst at Roebourne, in the North-West, in October 1959, I saw 3 eclipse-plumaged birds along the Harding River.

—JULIAN FORD, Attadale.

Bristle-bird, *Dasyornis brachypterus*, at Two People Bay.—

On January 1, 1961, shortly after 0600 hours, whilst observing on the access track to Two People Bay, in the vicinity of Lake Gardner, I was attracted by a single, loud, clear, short, but not unmusical note which I set down as "Beep." This was repeated at irregular intervals from positions on or very close to the ground. After watch-